

# The St. John Standard

VOL. VIII, NO. 229

TWELVE PAGES

THURSDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 21, 1916.

WEATHER—FAIR

PRICE TWO CENTS

## PRESIDENT WILSON ATTEMPTS TO ACCOMPLISH WORLD PEACE

### "PEACE NEARER THAN WE KNOW," POSSIBLY

#### Chief Executive of United States Surprises World by Endeavoring to Bring Warring Nations Together in an Effort to End Frightful Sacrifice of Blood and Treasure.

#### President Wilson, Officially Does Not Actually Propose Peace or Offer Mediation, But Suggests that Belligerent Nations Avow their Respective Views as to Terms Upon Which War Might be Concluded.

Washington, Dec. 20.—President Wilson has appealed to all the belligerents to discuss terms of peace. Without actually proposing peace or offering mediation the president has sent formal notes to the governments of all the warring nations suggesting that "an early occasion be sought to call out from the nations now at war such an avowal of their respective views as to the terms upon which the war might be concluded, and the arrangements which would be deemed satisfactory as a guaranty against renewal of the kindling of any similar conflict in the future as would make it possible frankly to compare them."

Wholly without notice, and entirely contrary to what administration officials have described as his course, the president last night despatched the notes to all the belligerents, and to all the neutrals for their information.

#### Washington Kept it Secret.

This latest development in the rapidly-moving world events toward a discussion of peace, was not permitted to become known until tonight, when the notes were well on their way to the American ambassadors in the belligerent capitals, and probably already in the hands of some of them.

It was a distinct surprise to all around Washington, which had been led to believe that, with the formal transmittal of the proposals of the Central Powers, the offices of the United States would await further moves between the belligerents themselves, and that, certainly, in view of the speech of Premier Lloyd George and the announcements in Russia, France and Italy, further action by neutrals would depend upon the next careful and delicate moves of the belligerents.

#### History-making Events.

Nowhere on the surface appears any indication of the history-making events which diplomatists generally are convinced must have transpired since the German allies brought their proposals to dispel the generally prevalent belief that such an action on the part of President Wilson would be unacceptable to the Entente Powers.

British embassy officials declared they were utterly taken by surprise, were wholly unable to explain it, and were emphatic in their statement that no exchange of views had passed through the embassy here as a preliminary.

The wish and hope of the German powers that President Wilson would intercede in some way has long been well known, and has been conveyed in different ways to the White House. The attitude of the Entente Allies, as expressed by their statesmen, and certainly until recently in official advice to the American government, has been that a peace offer by the United States would be considered almost the next thing to unfriendly. Diplomatists consider it incredible that the president would bring forward such a proposal at such a time, unless he had reason to believe it would receive respectful consideration at the hands of all the belligerents and, above all, would not prejudice the position of the United States as a possible mediator.

#### German Ambassador Talks.

The German embassy view, consistently hopeful that proposals of the Central allies would lead to a discussion of peace, was expressed in this authorized statement by Count Von Bernstorff, the German ambassador, as follows: "Now," said he, "I am perfectly convinced that there will be a conference."

The nearest parallel in world history for President Wilson's action was President Roosevelt's move in 1905 to end the war between Russia and Japan. But in that case the president had been assured his proposal would not be disagreeable to either of the belligerents, and, curiously enough, it was through Emperor William, of Germany, that the preliminary soundings crystallized into the suggestion that President Roosevelt take the steps.

These in official circles who would discuss the notes thought it worthy of attention that President Wilson,



PRESIDENT WILSON.

after saying his action had long been in mind, added:

"The president can only beg that his suggestion be considered entirely on its merits, and as if it had been made in other circumstances."

#### Peace of the World.

The president looks forward, in the notes, to the part the neutrals shall take in assuring the future peace of the world. He expresses justification in suggesting an immediate opportunity for a comparison of views as to the terms which must precede these ultimate arrangements for the peace of the world which all desire, and in which the neutral nations, as well as those at war, are ready to play their full responsible part.

There are indications that President Wilson began preparation of his note some time ago, probably even before the German proposals came out, and that the offer of the Central Powers and the succeeding developments made a more favorable opportunity for its presentation.

The fact that the President asks first only a clarification of terms is taken as that he is not expecting any immediate conclusion.

Just when the note was finished has not been disclosed, but it is known that it went to the cables yesterday. On Monday the higher officials of the state department were taken into the President's confidence and the text was sent to the public printer to make copies for the diplomatic corps. The fact that the note was completed not later than Monday, and its despatch Tuesday, indicate that it was sent regardless of anything that Lloyd George might say.

#### Expect Germany Pleas.

Officials expect the note to be received with general favor in Germany, but many believe the real test will come with its arrival in the Entente countries, where many influential persons have feared and sought to prevent any American intervention until

the military situation changed. From the fact, however, that Lloyd George's reply to the Central Powers was milder than generally had been expected, and still left the way open for further negotiations, it is believed that the Allies will meet the present note in at least a friendly spirit.

So far as Germany is concerned, the view held here is that she would be perfectly willing that a committee of three, formed of a representative of the Central Powers, a representative of the Entente and a representative of the United States should have preliminary discussions. The main idea of Germany and her allies is to set each set of belligerents into direct personal communication with the other. The method is considered of secondary importance.

The view prevails in German quarters that all the belligerents will make some definite statement in reply to the United States. The very phraseology of the American communication, it is felt, calls for replies far more definite than mere acknowledgments of receipts.

The notes to the belligerents are prefaced with this instruction by Secretary Lansing to the American ambassadors presenting them:

"The president directs me to send you the following communication, to be presented immediately to the minister of foreign affairs of the government to which you are accredited."

#### Text of Notes.

The text of the notes themselves then begins identically as follows: "The president of the United States has instructed me to suggest to the (here is inserted a designation of the government addressed), a course of action with regard to the present war which he hopes that the government will take under consideration as suggested, in the most friendly spirit, and as coming not only from a friend, but also as coming from the representative of a neutral nation, whose interests have been most seriously affected by the war, and whose concern for its early conclusion arises out of a manifest necessity to determine how best to safeguard those interests if the war is to continue."

#### President Embarrassed.

At this point the texts vary. In the notes to the Central Powers this paragraph follows next: "The suggestion which I am instructed to make the president has long had in mind to offer."

"He is somewhat embarrassed to offer it at this particular time, because it may now seem to have been prompted by a desire to play a part in connection with the recent overtures of the Central Powers. It has, in fact, been in no way suggested by them in its origin, and the president would have delayed offering it until those overtures had been independently answered but for the fact that

### TERRIFIC CRASH IN WALL STREET MARKET YESTERDAY

#### Bethlehem Steel (Schwab's "War Baby") Slumps 72 Points—Everybody Rushed to Sell Stocks in Final Hour and Thousands of Shares Thrown Overboard—Many Think Peace in Sight.

New York, Dec. 20.—Liquidation, far more active and comprehensive than any previously experienced in connection with the current decline, provoked additional substantial recessions today, war shares and affiliated issues registering extreme losses of five to fifteen points. Lowest levels were touched in the frenzied selling of the final hour, with virtually no recoveries from minimum quotations.

Pressure came from various directions, especially from believers that peace is near, financial institutions calling loans and exercising greater

discrimination against specialties; brokers calling upon customers to bolster impaired speculative accounts, and professional traders pursuing their recent advantage, seemingly without hindrance.

#### Bethlehem Down 72.

Bethlehem Steel was the most spectacular feature, falling 72 points to 500 on a few sales, and a loss of 200 points from its record quotation of a month ago.

Shipping shares ranked next in point of weakness, being freely sold from the outset on the intimations conveyed from abroad that the British government intends to take over control of British shipping. Mercantile marine

(Continued on page 3)

### BRITISH ENTER ENEMY'S TRENCHES IN NORTH FRANCE

#### Berlin Announces that Russians, Roumanians and Serbians are Making Another Stand in Dobrudja—Russians Repulse Attacks.

London, Dec. 21.—The official statement from British headquarters in France reads as follows:

"During the night the enemy lines were entered by us in the neighborhood of Gommecourt and considerable damage was done. A number of prisoners were taken in the course of another successful raid carried out by us early this morning against the enemy's trenches north of Arras.

"In a patrol encounter this morning north of Neuve Chapelle the leader of the hostile patrol was killed; his men were taken prisoners. The enemy exploded a camouflet south of Ypres.

"The enemy's artillery was particularly active on the right of our line north of the Somme and in the neighborhood of Festubert and Ypres. Our artillery vigorously replied.

"Enemy trenches at Gommecourt and in the neighborhood of Loos and Hulluch were also bombarded by us."

#### Violent Bombardment.

Paris, Dec. 20.—The bulletin issued by the war office tonight on the campaign in France reads:

"South of the Somme the enemy violently bombarded our lines during the day, especially in the sectors of Belleu-en-Santerre, Berry, Pressuire and Abaincourt. Our artillery replied energetically. There were intermittent artillery actions on the rest of the front."

"The Belgian communication:

"After a relatively quiet morning, the enemy opened, in the course of the afternoon, a violent artillery fire in the region of Heesam. The Belgian artillery silenced the enemy guns."

(Continued on page 3)

### FIFTEEN ARE KILLED BY VOLCANO

San Salvador, Republic of Salvador, Dec. 20.—A volcanic explosion near the small village of Lower Verapaz, Guatemala, has caused the death of fifteen persons.

### CHINA WILL KEEP OUT OF WAR

Peking, Dec. 20.—Hsi-Yi-Ting, vice minister of foreign affairs, appeared before the lower house of parliament today, answered questions concerning a rumor that China was preparing to join the Entente. He declared that China was absolutely not considering entering the European struggle, and that she would maintain the strictest neutrality.

Hsi-Yi-Ting spoke as the representative of Premier Tuan-Chi-Jui.

It also concerns the question of peace, and may best be considered in connection with other proposals which have the same end in view. The president can only beg that his suggestion be considered entirely on its own merits, and as if it had been made in other circumstances."

(Continued on page 4)

### PORTLAND PUTS THE LID ON

Portland, Me., Dec. 20.—Bars have closed in Portland on orders from Mayor Chapman.

Keeps of 40 barrels that have been open nearly two years, with a single interim of three weeks a year ago, were notified by local wholesalers that this was the last day they are to have retail privileges. The lid went on tight.

With the advent on January 1 of King F. Graham as sheriff, an exceptionally strong enforcement advocate, it had been conceded that the sale of liquor openly would cease. Dealers were reckoning, therefore, on nearly two weeks more of business and now must ship their unsold surplus back whence it came, outside the State.

### GERMANS SANK THE SUFFREN

Berlin, Dec. 20, via London.—A German submarine torpedoed and sank the French battleship Suffren, according to an official statement given out tonight. The statement reads: "One of our submarines sank on November 26, by a torpedo an enemy ship of the line northwest of Lisbon. It was the French battleship Suffren, reported lost with the entire crew by the French admiralty on December 8."

### GERMANY MUST EVACUATE CONQUERED COUNTRIES

#### Baron Sheffield Interprets Premier David Lloyd-George's World-History-Making Speech and Tells How Central Powers Can Make Reparation

#### BELGIUM, SERBIA, POLAND, MONTENEGRO, ROMANIA MUST COME INTO THEIR OWN—ENGLISH TOWNS SHOULD BE COMPENSATED FOR BOMBARDMENT—SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES IN PEACE MOVEMENT.

London, Dec. 20. (New York Sun).—The exact scope of Premier Lloyd George's claim for reparation was the subject of eager discussion in the lobby of the Commons.

Reparation should include, in the opinion of Baron Sheffield: "The complete evacuation of Belgium, with ample financial compensation to that country for outrages committed. The restoration of destroyed buildings and industrial equipment; repayment in full, with interest, on the levies, both in money and materials, taken from it; compensation to those forcibly torn from their homes and sent to servile labor under German taskmasters, often in connection with military work, and compensation for those put to death by the invaders.

#### Serbia, France, Poland.

"The same should apply to Serbia, France and Poland. "For us, compensation for the open towns wantonly bombarded by German ships; compensation for all injuries to life and property in air raids upon civilians in open towns and villages; compensation for merchant ships sunk by cruisers, submarines and mines; compensation for lives sacrificed, in all such cases; punishment, if necessary, capital punishment, of those in authority who have ordered savage acts of repression and cruelty. "When the Germans understand that this indicates the kind of reparation we expect for the past," continued Baron Sheffield, "we will indicate the securities we demand for the future.

#### Demand Withdrawal of Huns.

"As treaty obligations are treated by Germany as scraps of paper, we should demand, antecedent to negotiations, the withdrawal of Germany's forces and those of her allies from all territory outside the limits of their former dominions. "When the Germans assent and comply with these terms we can begin to discuss any further agreement leading to peace, but not till then."

#### Reply of Central Powers.

Amsterdam, via London, Dec. 20.—The New Wiener Journal, published in Vienna, says:

"The reply of the Entente nations to the peace proposals of the Central Powers, will certainly be as equivocal as the speeches of Premier Lloyd George, Premier Briand and the Italian foreign minister, Baron Sonnino. Nevertheless the idea of peace has made a step forward."

#### The Peace Movement.

Berlin, Dec. 20, by wireless to Sayville.—A peace movement is being considered by Norway, Sweden and Switzerland, in which they wish the co-operation of Holland, according to Deputy Schaper, of the Dutch parliament, as quoted in a despatch to the Overseas News Agency from Rotterdam.

### SIR ROBERT AND R. B. BENNETT AT BRANDON

Brandon, Man., Dec. 20.—Notwithstanding the early hour of nine o'clock and a temperature eight below zero, Brandon turned out in force at the Arena today to hear Sir Robert Borden and R. B. Bennett, M. P., director-general of national service. It was the closing on the prairies of a whirlwind campaign across the continent undertaken in the cause of national service. Two trains from neighboring towns swelled the audience away over three thousand. The meeting was necessarily brief as the party entrained at halfpast ten for Toronto. Premier Norris was present.

#### LACKS SINCERITY SAYS ENTENTE ALLY OF EAST

Tokio, Dec. 20.—Viscount Motono, foreign minister, today told members of parliament that he believed the German peace proposal lacked sincerity, and that Germany does not really desire peace. He added that Japan's reply to the proposal would be made after consultation with her allies.